

**But I Have Prayed For Thee** (Luke 22:31-32)

*God Interrupts Our Sifting*

**Proposition:** Every child of God can count on two things: 1) The sift of Satan. 2) the prevailing intercession of our Great High Priest. I want you to see three facts from this sift.

**I. The Initiation of the Sifting** (Vs. 31)

- A. Satan is at the Heart of the Sift (Vs. 31b)
- B. Shipwreck is the Hope of the Sift (Vs. 31c)
- C. Self-assurance is the Happenstance of the Sift (Vs. 33)

**II. The Intercession in the Sifting** (Vs. 32)

- A. The Christ of Intercession (Vs. 32a)
- B. The Concern of Intercession (Vs. 32b)
- C. The Construction of Intercession (Vs. 32b)

**III. The Interruption of the Sifting** (Vs. 32c-d)

- A. The Recovery of the Sifted (Vs. 32c)
- B. The Reinforcement of the Saint (Vs. 32d)

But I have Prayed for Thee Luke 22:31-32  
In 1986 George MacDonald was the president of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. He was admired and respected by countless people throughout the Christian community. Within a year, he was a broken man. He had committed adultery. By 1988, he was on the long road to healing and wrote a therapeutic book which dealt with his own brokenness called Rebuilding Your Broken World. In this book, MacDonald shared an experience which took place several years before his adulterous relationship, while

on campus to speak at a college commencement, he struck up a conversation with a school board member. After some pleasantries the new acquaintance asked, "If Satan were to blow you out of the water, how do you think he would do it?" "I'm not sure I know," said MacDonald. "All sorts of ways, I suppose, but I know there's one way he wouldn't get me." "What's that?" "He'd never get me in the area of my personal relationships," answered MacDonald. "That's one place where..."

I. The Chastisement of the Sift - These words of sifting are intended to shake Simon Peter from his self-confidence. Vs 33. "I'm willing to die." But Peter then



a sift coming. Where is the sift coming from?

A. Satan is at the Heart of the Sift (Vs 31)

Jesus makes it clear that at the heart of this trial is Satan's desire, The thief coming to steal and to kill. Jesus gives us a little insight into heavenly happenings.

Did you know Satan prays. He begs God for life his presidential pledge and allow an attack.

It is a comforting thought that every other filter

B. Shipwreck is the Hope of the Sift (31)

This sifting that Jesus mentions is a word picture convey the goal of Satan. In Palestine the harvested wheat was thrown beaten and shaken to remove the chaff or husk off the cereal of wheat. Sift = to rattle or shake violently Vs 32 tells us that Satan's hope is to Shipwreck Peter's faith. Satan says "I'll ring"

C. Self-Assurance is the Happenstance of Sift

Just like George MacDonald's hole states left the door wide open to attack, Peter's Pledge in Vs 33 provided the occasion for attack! I don't believe Satan can read our mind, but he can definitely hear what we say. We can be bumping along telling everyone how we got it under control kids marriage

II. The Intercessor of the Sift - Vs 33

We would have all been in a mess if Jesus would have stopped a verse 31! But thank God that's not the end of the story

1) "...place where I have no doubt I'm as strong as you can get."

Little did Gorge MacDonald know that on the heels of these confident words, a sift was just around the corner. In the same manner we all know the claims of Peter to die for the Saviour and all the while the sift was around the corner. We are all vulnerable to Satan's sifting. But here in our text, we are assured of an interceding Christ. Every child of God can count on two things: 1) The sift of Satan. 2) the prevailing intercession of our Great High Priest. I want you to see three facts from this sift.

2) "...ring his bell and his faith will flutter away like a chaff in the wind. And if your faith was left up to you, that phony plastic faith would fall off and be carried away by the wind, but as we will see later, our faith is not left up to us.

3) "...marriage, job and God is looking around saying, "Where is that sift!" Peter left the door wide open.

1) ...The Son of God, God the Son interrupting the sifting of Satan.

2) ...left the door wide open for attack, thank God He ever liveth to make intercession for His own. Robert Murray M'Cheyne said "If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me."

3) ...there is no intercession by Christ and they are blown away by the wind of adversity and trial. Remember: **John 17:9** *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.* Faith in a prayer prayed, in a baptismal exercise, or a card filled out is not anchored to the intercession of Christ. My faith is easily sifted and faith on my own would put me in hell. But my faith tied Christ's intercession is enough to see me through the sifts of life and place me on the streets of gold!



But I have prayed for thee? The Son of God (1)

A. The Christ of Intercession - I was speaking to a pastor recently and before we ended our conversation, he prayed for me. That prayer humbled me and encouraged me. But

there is nothing more strengthening and encouraging than knowing that Jesus himself the perfect Son of God is interceding on my behalf. Even when my carnality + confidence has left the

B. The Concern of Intercession - The concern of Jesus prayer is found in the phrase "faith fail not." Remember Satan wants that faith to be blown away like chaff in the wind. Chaff is blown away

because it has no substance, there is no weight to it. Like a lot of people's false professions, and when the sift comes there is no

C. The Construction of Intercession -

Now if you will read on, you will find that the Sift came, Peter ran, and denied the Lord and even attempted to return to fishing. The intercession of Jesus did not avert the sift as a whole, it just interrupted the intended purpose. The sift did break Peter.

But God has a way of only using broken things <sup>shotgun</sup>.

III. The Interruption of the Sift.

God can interrupt the sifts of Satan in our lives. Joseph went through sift and said you sent it for evil... Job went through the sift

and came forth as gold. God uses the sifting for good + glory

### A. The Recovery of the Sifted - 32c

"When thou art converted." Although this word converted can mean salvation through repentance & faith, it can also just mean turn, changed, or renewed. Jesus is saying, the sift is coming Peter but there is hope on the other side of the sift. There is a recovery! One of my favorite preachers said "God saw Peter first before Simon ever saw the sift." A disciple that sunk so low as to curse people that accused him of being w/Christ, recovered and used by God to save 3000

### B. The Reinforcement of the Saint - 32c

Jesus prayers are always answered. I've prayed for you, your going to be recovered now on the other side of the sift. Strengthen your brothers. If you have been through the sift and recovered then you are obligated to reinforce your brothers & sister with the news that there is a sift a coming, but God can interrupt our sift and recover us. I believe that's why Peter wrote 1 Peter 5:8-9 in his letter. Paul said in 2 Cor 1:4 That God comforts us

IV. Closing - Despite the sift that happened in George MacDonald's life, God has used him and his sifting experience in the lives of pastors, schools, colleges, churches. are you being sifted. Jesus interrupts



1) ...God to save 3000? The recovery of the sifted is a help to me!!

2) 1 Peter 5:8-9 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

3) 2 Corinthians 1:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble...